

# Wildlife Program

Week of August 1 – August 7, 2016

## **WOLF ACTIVITIES**

### **Region 1 Wolf Activities**

**Conference Calls:** Supervisor McCanna participated on multiple conference calls this week regarding current wolf activity in Profanity Peak.

**Wolf Coordination:** Supervisor McCanna spent a considerable amount of time coordinating with Region 1 staff members, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Ferry County sheriff, producers, and range riders.

**Profanity Peak Wolf Pack:** Conflict Specialist Shepherd, Natural Resource Worker Weatherman, and Supervisor McCanna conducted investigations on two potential wolf depredations on calves involving the Profanity Peak wolf pack. Both calves were confirmed wolf kills (number 4 and 5 confirmed). The green light was given to start a partial pack removal of the Profanity Peak wolf pack. Conflict Specialist Shepherd, Natural Resource Worker Weatherman, and Supervisor McCanna supported the aerial removal effort with ground-based efforts.

**Stranger Wolf Pack:** Conflict Specialist Shepherd encouraged a livestock producer who had a confirmed wolf depredation to work on the application for compensation. Natural Resource Worker Weatherman spent time with an intern monitoring the Stranger pack. Several landowners were contacted within the home range of the Stranger pack and given advice and fliers with suggestions on how to deal with wolves.

**Sanpoil River:** Conflict Specialist Shepherd, a Ferry County sheriff deputy, and Supervisor McCanna conducted an investigation on a potential depredation on a live calf. The cause of the injuries was unknown.

**Wolf Concerns in Huckleberry:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett continued to work with a concerned livestock producer near Deer Creek. Several nights of wolf howling were reported. Coordination with an area private industrial timber company was also made.

**Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement for Livestock (DPCA\_L):** Biologist Earl worked with producers to discuss deterrent measures for DPCA\_L agreements. Earl travelled to various grazing allotments to talk with privately contracted range riders and see how things were going.

**Wolf Activities:** Biologist Earl and Conflict Specialist Rasley had reports this week about wolf sighting around Robinette Mountain. Some of the sightings seemed to correlate to the collar activities of OR-38.

**Collaring Efforts:** Biologist Earl talked to Biologist Roussin about recent reported wolf activities in the Blue Mountains, as Roussin was in Asotin County to look for trapping possibilities. Earl also contacted producers in the area to inform them of the activity.

## **REGION 1**

### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE & PROTECT NATIVE FISH & WILDLIFE***

**Summer Deer Surveys:** District Biologists Dana Base and Annemarie Prince teamed with other agency partners this week to initiate summer deer counts on both traditional and standardized survey transects within District 1. As of this week's end, seven of 20 survey routes to be covered this month have been surveyed. Both white-tailed and mule deer were observed, with classifications made for doe, fawn, and buck deer, including antler point category and age class on bucks.



**Monarchs and Milkweed:** Biologists Atamian and Lowe surveyed known patches of milkweed on Swanson Lakes (WDFW) and Twin Lakes (BLM) in Lincoln County for monarch butterfly usage. No monarch use was detected in the WDFW patches, but one monarch caterpillar was found at the Twin Lakes patch. We also found one unknown patch of milkweed off Highline Road. It was on private property, so we were unable to search it for larvae or eggs, but no adult monarchs were seen. Surveys will continue next summer to improve our knowledge of milkweed distribution and monarch usage in Washington. Monarchs are considered an imperiled species and Washington data is currently lacking.







***Monarch caterpillar on milkweed leaf at Twin Lakes***



***Milkweed on side of county road in Lincoln County***

**Bat Survey:** Biologist Lowe and Wildlife Area Manager Anderson assisted BLM and volunteers in a bat survey on BLM's Rock Ranch property in Lincoln County. Bats were tallied as they exited several roosting structures. There were 546 bats counted, which is about half of last year's total. Thermal imaging and night vision equipment were used to help with counts.

***Some of the structures monitored during a bat exit survey at Rock Ranch***



**Water Trough:** Finch drove parts of Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area on Tuesday to inspect parking areas. He also checked out the windmill and water trough near the far west parking lot. The solar pump, down about 25 feet into a shallow well, is still producing enough water to keep the old concrete cattle watering trough full. A wide variety of wildlife now uses the trough.

***The west end windmill/trough at Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area. Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Finch saw at least 20 doves here on 8/4/16.***



## ***GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES***

**Access Contracting:** Private Lands Biologist Lewis continued working with WDFW contracts staff members on the re-enrollment process, contract amendments, and new contracts for the Voluntary Public Access program. The program will provide public hunting access to approximately 60,000 acres of private property in Spokane and Whitman counties.

**Hunt by Reservation:** Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley worked with Natural Resource Technician Wade on loading available hunting schedules into the Private Hunting Lands Opportunity page for a Hunt by Reservation property. There were over 827 available hunts loaded. Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley spent time scheduling hunting seasons and loading available hunting day schedules into the Private Hunting Lands Opportunity page for two Hunt by Reservation properties in Walla Walla County.

**Landowner Hunting Permit (LHP):** Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley had a gentleman stop by the office who had stopped by before on another occasion concerning property he sold to Bennett Lumber years ago and rights that were included in the sale agreement. The gentleman stated that in the sales agreement he had unlimited access for wood cutting and hunting. Private Lands Biologist Thorne Hadley had previously asked if he had that in writing and if he could share that document. The gentleman did find the document and brought it with him. Further discussion will be continued.

## ***GOAL 3: PROMOTE A HEALTHY ECONOMY, PROTECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER, MAINTAIN AN OVERALL HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, AND DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE***

**Goat Depredation in Spokane County:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Bennett and WDFW Officer Langbehn responded to a Cheney area residence after it was reported that two pygmy goats had been killed. After examination of the scene and carcasses it was determined to have been coyotes. Advice and additional information was provided.

**While Hazing Elk:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Rasley was attempting to haze some elk out of a pea field early one morning when a pickup came by Rasley at a very high rate of speed. As it turned out the truck loaded with tools was stolen from one of our cooperators and several sheriff's deputies were trying to apprehend the suspect. The deputies were responding from the north and Rasley was coming up the same road from the south. The suspect clearly was not familiar with the road and its rough condition and terrain. Within one mile the driver rolled the pickup after blowing out several tires. The truck caught fire and the suspect fled the scene. The driver was apprehended later that night by a farmer while walking off the mountain.



## **REGION 2**

No report submitted this week.

## **REGION 3**

### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

#### **Wildlife Areas**

**Colockum Wildlife Area:** Summer is in full swing this week, with another crop of deer fawns and elk calves appearing.

#### ***Mule deer fawn on Colockum this week***

**Naneum Lake HPA:** Manager Lopushinsky continued to work with Wildlife and Habitat to secure an HPA to return water to Naneum Lake. This lake is close to drying up after a post-fire change in the stream that feeds it.







*Naneum Lake before the 2012 Table Mountain Fire*



*Naneum Lake this week, after blockage of lake inlet*

**Bighorn Sheep:** Colockum staff members Hagan and Lopushinsky accompanied Biologists Burnham and Moore to the Cape Horn area to characterize soil and habitat types for Moore's bighorn sheep home range analysis project. They used the Colockum boat and ATVs to access the sites.

**Sunnyside Wildlife Area:** Manager Buser and Assistant Manager Kaelber monitored fire activity on Rattlesnake Mountain. Much of the mountain and ridge toward Yakima burned as part of the Range 12 Fire. Despite the vast acreage burned, the Rattlesnake Slope Unit and the Thornton Unit escaped any fire damage.

*A back burn was conducted on Rattlesnake Mountain to help contain the Range 12 Fire near the U.S. Department of Energy Hanford Site and the Arid Lands Ecological Reserve (ALE), which are both near the Rattlesnake Slope unit of the wildlife area*



**ALEA Grant Program:** Manager Buser submitted the annual field contact report for the ALEA Grant Program. The Richland Rod and Gun Club received grant funding for their ongoing project of installing, rehabilitating and inspecting wildlife guzzlers in the Columbia Basin, as well as providing education to the public on their benefits. Wildlife area staff members have been working with the club to provide storage space for guzzler materials and assist with transporting materials to worksites as needed.

**L.T. Murray Wildlife Area:** Assistant Manager Hunt welcomed new L.T. Manager Melissa (Mel) Babik aboard this week, and helped her get oriented. We have a lot going on and much to cover, but we are getting a good start.

**Whiskey Dick Wildlife Area:** Natural Resource Technician Hill spent the week spraying weeds throughout the Whiskey Dick Wildlife Area. He sprayed mainly for kochia, Russian thistle, and Canada thistle. The trouble spots he focused on were Cayuse spring and along Whiskey Dick Creek near Whiskey Dick Bay.



*Russian thistle at Cayuse Spring*



*Canada thistle along Whiskey Dick Creek*

### **Wildlife Management**

**Mourning Dove Trapping:** District Biologist Fidorra trapped mourning doves at the Ringold Hatchery site. Numbers remain low, with almost no juveniles, indicating poor local production. A few quail and Eurasian collared doves were caught. Trapping for the season at Ringold is now finished.

**Range 12 Fire:** District Biologist Fidorra and Conflict Specialist Hand inspected fire damage to private ranches after the Range 12 fire, which burned 176,600 acres from the Yakima Training Center to Hanford-ALE site. Most private land in the BlackRock and Silver Dollar LHP areas was burned, but most structures were saved. The loss of shrub-steppe and grassland habitat connecting the Yakima Training Center and ALE is significant and will have conservation implications for sage grouse, mule deer, and other species. Much of the winter range of the Hanford elk herd on ALE was spared, but where elk forage during the fall will have impacts on the hunting season and crop producers.

#### ***Range 12 fire damage to private lands in the Black Rock LHP area***

**Bat Survey:** District Biologist Fidorra continued the WDFW bat survey. He placed acoustic bat detectors at sites in District 4 and 5, and coordinated with District 5





Assistant Biologist Rowan to relocate detectors near the Ephrata office. Fidorra is placing detector at eight sites and will repeat recording protocols at each site monthly through August.

**Duck Traps:** District Biologist Fidorra worked with Private Lands Biologist Stutzman and Wildlife Area Assistant Manager Kaelber to set up duck traps on the Baillie Youth Ranch. Two traps will be on Baillie and two others on the Mesa Unit.

*Duck trap set up at one of the ponds at the Baillie Youth Ranch*



**SWAP:** District Biologist Fidorra explored and tested products from the SWAP and prepared comments for other members of the WDFW Team assessing ways to utilize and distributing SWAP tools within the agency.

**Duck Banding:** Private Lands Biologist Stutzman, District Biologist Fidorra, and Assistant Manager Kaelber set up two duck traps on the Windmill Unit in preparation for duck banding. Four traps will be used in total and trapping will begin later this week or early next week.

**Fire Damage:** Private Lands Biologist Stutzman surveyed the damage from the Range 12 fire and other small fires that occurred in Benton and Yakima counties last week. At least three access properties were affected by fires, along with thousands of acres of habitat on private land.



*Recent fires in Yakima County highlighted another of the many benefits of using metal signs over plastic signs*



**Bighorn Sheep:** Biologist Bernatowicz attended a meeting sponsored by USFS to review the potential conflict between bighorn sheep and domestics. The meeting format was somewhat unusual, as there was no question/answer session immediately following presentations, which went for almost three hours. The USFS has indicated they will start NEPA on domestic sheep grazing/bighorn sheep conflicts this fall.

**Waterfowl Banding:** Biologist Bernatowicz banded one evening for the Yakama Nation, with help from the Washington Waterfowl Association. About 25 birds were captured, but many had already been banded earlier this year.

**Bighorn Sheep Home Range Analysis:** A site visit was made to the northern end of the Colockum Wildlife Area by Biologists Moore, Burnham, Lopushinsky, and Hagan to field check the soil data used in the bighorn sheep range analysis. Three criteria were used to evaluate seven areas of vegetation near Cape Horn. We wanted to determine if the soil boundaries observed in the field match with the GIS polygon boundaries, do the vegetation communities observed match the description in the ecological site data, and whether the percent composition of these areas match the means given in the soils data. Six of the seven polygons were extremely accurate for all criteria, but one polygon boundary was off by approximately 40 meters. The site visit informed some changes to the NDVI sampling points. Two points within the inaccurately mapped polygon were moved to different locations with the appropriate vegetation. Moore also performed a GIS inspection of other sites not visited to check for inaccuracies. Overall, this site visit builds our confidence in the soils data, but further field and or GIS visual checks will be needed.



*A classic 301 site characterized by stiff sage, bluegrass, buckwheat, and hooker's balsam root*



*A 101 site burned during the Colockum Tarps Fire that is now dominated by bluebunch wheatgrass and cheatgrass*

**Teanaway Spotted Owl Survey:** The final visit to the Indian Creek Territory was completed during the week. Moore decided to visit during the early morning hours to beat the heat while surveying the daytime locations. No owls were heard during the survey.

*A nice morning view from a ridge above Indian Creek*



**GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES**

**Wildlife Areas**

**Wenas Wildlife Area:** Biologist Longoria developed a visual map showing the proximity of homes to the proposed shooting range locations using quarter mile concentric circles. Additionally, he made exact measurements to the homes in feet, which could be useful in both the EA and working with the public.

***Map showing proximity of homes to proposed Bull Pasture and Sheep Company Road shooting sites***

**Sunnyside Wildlife Area:** Manager Buser and District Fisheries Biologist Hoffarth met with the Columbia Basin Fly Casters Club. Powerline Lake fishing opportunities was the primary topic of discussion, and the club is interested in helping acquire new informational signs for the parking lot and directional signs to the lake.



**GOAL 3: PROMOTE A HEALTHY ECONOMY, PROTECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER, MAINTAIN AN OVERALL HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, AND DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE**

**Wildlife Management**

**Range 12 Fire:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand and District Biologist Fidorra surveyed fire damage from the Range 12 fire at Hanford and surrounding private lands in the Silver Dollar and Blackrock areas. The majority of the lands enrolled in our Landowner Hunting Permit program burned in both areas, as well as the northern face of Rattlesnake Mountain above 1,200 feet in elevation. Much of the week was spent responding to public inquiries concerning elk movements and potential damage scenarios.





*Remains of a burned WDFW habitat plot near Silver Dollar*



*Cow elk in burned area of Hanford*

**Deer Damage:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand received and responded to a deer damage complaint from the Plymouth area. Continued hazing using pyrotechnics and LP gas cannons are having limited success with deer browsing on grape plants at a wine producing vineyard. Two damage prevention permits were issued to assist with their deterrence tactics.

**Elk Damage:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Hand conducted elk damage assessments in wheat crops with landowners and crop adjustors. So far, only moderate damage was observed and included consumption, trailing, and bedding.

**Deer and Elk Conflict:** Conflict Specialist Wetzel worked with landowners and crop producers who continue to report deer and elk beginning to switch feeding activities toward irrigated croplands this week. Elk were again reported in west Ellensburg, north Kittitas, Badger Pocket, and south Cle Elum. Deer were reported at several areas in Cle Elum. Landowners have requested permits, but many have expired contracts and have either not sufficiently used nonlethal methods or have not sustained the required damage level (or expected to reach the required damage level) to receive permits at this time.



*Elk tracks crossing a bridge into a timothy field (animal in photo is not an elk)*



*Elk group after herding out of area, away from timothy field (animals in photo are not dogs)*

**Elk Fence:** Conflict Specialist Wetzel worked with a landowner to begin construction on an elk herding wing fence this week. One volunteer and the landowner will help this week.

**Cost-Share Fencing:** Conflict Specialist Wetzel delivered fencing materials to start a new cost-share fencing project in Cle Elum this week.

*Cost share fencing for Cle Elum cider orchard*

**GOAL 4: BUILD AN EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION BY SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE, IMPROVING BUSINESS PROCESSES, AND INVESTING IN TECHNOLOGY**



### Wildlife Areas

**Wenas Wildlife Area:** Assistant Manager Taylor met with Bridge Inspector Davidson and Habitat Biologist Bartrand earlier in the week to assess blockage and erosion to the Mellotte Bridge. Following this meeting, Wenas Wildlife Area staff members cleared debris by hand from the creek to get water flowing back under the bridge at Mellotte. Additionally, they cleared windblown trees blocking the road at Mellotte.

**Oak Wildlife Area:** Manager Huffman and Forester Mackey attended part of a contractor site tour for the SF Cowiche Creek Flood Plain Enhancement Project. The first part of the tour consisted of visiting the forested stands on Oak Creek and discussing harvest strategy and transport of logs to Cowiche. The second part of the tour consisted of a visit to SF Cowiche Creek to see the placement location. On the Oak Creek portion of the tour, it became obvious



the harvest portion of the bid package put out by Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group and Yakama Nation did not have sufficient information to allow bidders to accurately bid on the project. The bid package was re-advertised late in the week, with the needed changes, and another contractor tour was set for August 15.

**Oak Creek Management Plan:** Manager Huffman worked on adding content to the outline for the Oak Creek Management Plan. The focus was on describing the units of the wildlife area and success stories for current/past projects. Huffman and Forester Mackey attended an all-day Oak Creek Management Planning Team meeting later in the week.

## **REGION 4**

### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

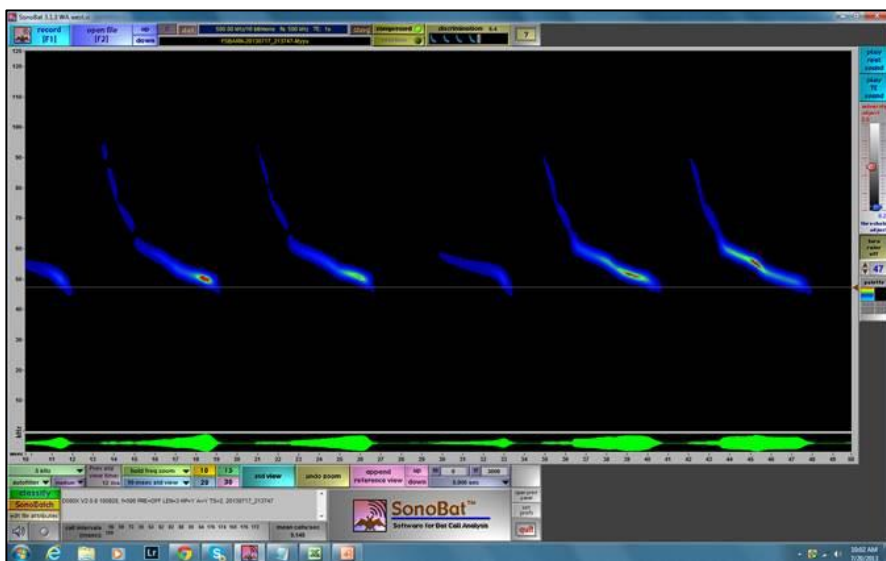
#### **Wildlife Management**

**Summer Bat Colony Surveys:** District 13 visited three sites that have been reported as potential maternity colonies for bats. One site near Lake Roesiger supported bats several years ago, but no bats were found and the local land managers were unaware of a maternity site among their buildings. One site on Whidbey Island contained about 300 bats of two different species. Two thirds appear to be little brown bats and one third are apparently Yuma bats. A third site appears to house big brown bats, but the detection tapes have not yet been analyzed.

*Yuma myotis bats calls displayed through computer analysis of sonic bat call detectors*

#### **Wolverine Study:**

Biologists Yarborough and DeBruyn participated in a conference call to continue planning an interagency wolverine study this winter. Besides WDFW, representatives of USFS, the National Park Service, The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the Woodland Park Zoo are involved in the study.



**Mountain Goat Surveys:** Biologists completed all data entry and analysis related to mountain goats in District 14. Results indicate a stable population in the Mt. Baker Area.

***Recent survey results indicate a stable population of mountain goats in the Mt. Baker Area***

**Protected Wildlife Management – White-Nose Syndrome in Bats:**

District 12 continued acoustic efforts throughout the Snoqualmie Valley (Crescent Lake and, continuing this month, south through Cherry Valley and Stillwater wildlife management units). Biologist Anderson contacted managing entities in Seattle, where a second bat (silver-haired bat) was found positive to be carrying the fungus that causes white-nose syndrome – but was not affected by it (nor is it known to be from elsewhere in its range). Anderson is following up with these entities to discuss the instance, how to help with finding bat roosts in the area, precautions to take to reduce potential fungus spread, and to report any odd bat behavior or dead/dying bats immediately.



Anderson and a number of other WDFW staff members were co-authors on a recently published peer-reviewed journal article regarding the strain of *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* sampled off the first known bat found in Washington (and west) outside of North Bend. An announcement regarding this can be found here:

[http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/publications/wildlife\\_health\\_bulletins/WHB\\_2016-05\\_WNS\\_updates.pdf](http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/publications/wildlife_health_bulletins/WHB_2016-05_WNS_updates.pdf). A link to the paper here, “First Detection of Bat White-nose Syndrome in Western North America,” can be found at <http://msphere.asm.org/content/1/4/e00148-16>.

***Little brown bat found in western Washington in March 2016. The fungus damaged the bat's wings, making it unable to fly*** – Photo by Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS)

District 12 continues to have weekly internal meetings and regular interaction with other peers in the U.S. and Canada regarding this wildlife epidemic, which is considered by many professionals as the most aggressive and dire wildlife pathogen currently on earth. Meetings this week included bat habitat modelling with DNR and a separate internal meeting regarding ongoing conservation, management, and immediate field effort needs.



WDFW and collaborators are asking the public to report dead or dying/sick bats via our hotline found at the link below. Decontamination, outlined in the below links, is essential to assist in the management of this pathogen, particularly in the research, management, and recreationist communities, such as caving, climbing, and canyoneering.



Report dead or sick/dying bats at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/health/wns/>.

More information can be found at <https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/>.

**Island Marble Butterfly Strategy Meeting:** District 13 attended a meeting with the Olympia Diversity Program to discuss Island Marble Butterfly biology and management.

**Wildlife Conflict Interview Q13 print and 5 p.m. News:** District 12 provided an interview regarding urban wildlife, development, dynamics of human-wildlife interactions as natural habitat and built environment come closer together, and how to take steps to reduce conflict. This was provided in print and also aired that evening on the 5 p.m. news. The print version can be found at <http://q13fox.com/2016/07/28/more-new-homes-more-encounters-with-wildlife/>.

**WDFW-Woodland Park Zoo Amphibian Monitoring Efforts – Keeping Common Species Common and Monitoring for Rare Species:** WDFW (District 12 and CitSci Biologist Connally) and Woodland Park Zoo met to discuss changes in electronic formatting of this project to provide for streamline of data, social networking, and perhaps expansion beyond WDFW and Woodland Park Zoo in the future.

**Urban Bird Management and Conservation:** District 12 participated in planning and discussions surrounding efforts with USFWS, Audubon WA, Seattle Audubon, Heron Habitat Helpers, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and others to finalize needs and move forward with event planning to kick off an urban bird conservation effort in the city of Seattle.

### **Wildlife Areas**

**Cherry Valley Unit:** Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm reports that King County Noxious Weeds staff members treated the Cherry Valley and Stillwater units for invasive purple loosestrife. This invasive weed has been trying to get established in numerous areas within the



unit. King County has worked with Manager Boehm the last three years to map and treat this weed so it does not get established. King County provided a field crew, supporting equipment, and personnel to remove invasive purple loosestrife.

***Green heron***

## ***GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES***

### **Wildlife Management**

**Wildlife Conflict:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman coordinated with a landowner in Skagit County to provide a hunting opportunity to a disabled hunter to address an ongoing damage situation. The landowner and the hunter were happy with the experience to harvest an elk.

#### ***Successful hunter participating in a damage hunt***

#### **Consultation of Wildlife Management Needs – Seattle Parks – Ballard**

##### **Locks/Commodore Park Heron Colony:**

District 12 provided recommendations per request of Seattle Parks regarding habitat work planned in Commodore Park. Work is planned immediately under the heron colony there. There are still birds nesting (some chicks are 4-weeks old). Parks is currently planning to wait until the chicks are gone in September, or once colony activity ceases due to other factors, such as predation (eagles have visited the colony as they do every year). This colony is very much in the public eye given it is at a heavily visited tourist spot in Seattle, the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks on Lake Washington that lead to Puget Sound.



**Waterfowl Trapping:** Biologist DeBruyn started setting up traps for the annual effort to trap and band resident waterfowl. Testing for high path avian influenza will also be part of the program.

**Exotic Invasive Species Management – Cross Program Effort:** District 12 and 13 worked with Fish Program in the Olympia Aquatic Invasive Species Unit and Region 4 to examine sites for a trapping blitz of reported invasive species. AIS and District 12 and 13 spent all week trapping for the species and found new sites of occurrence. Follow up work will continue, as well as engagement with property owners and municipalities regarding management concerns and next steps.

\*Note: the Washington State Wildlife Action Plan calls out Exotic Invasive Species as the second most serious threat to our state wildlife and habitats...after climate change.



**Efforts in Wildlife Connectivity and Transportation Wildlife Conflict Reduction:** District 12 received a report from King County transportation biologists regarding use of an overpass and planned connectivity corridor that KDOT planned into the recent NE Novelty Hill project, on which WDFW consulted. An exciting picture of a bear was captured.

***Photo of ear-tagged bear using overpass in Redmond, NE Novelty Hill Road Project area*** – Photo courtesy of Todd Martin, King County Department of Transportation



### **Wildlife Areas**

**Crescent Lake Unit:** Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm coordinated with volunteers to continue internal access road and trail improvements at this unit. Truckloads of wood chips are being donated and delivered by a local land clearing business. The chips will form a base on the roads to allow vehicle traffic during the fall and winter season.

**Nooksack Unit Garbage Cleanup:** Manager Kessler cleaned up a large amount of garbage dumped in the parking area on the Nooksack Unit at Marietta. Old mattresses, broken televisions, and household garbage was collected and removed.

**Lake Terrell Pheasant Pen Repairs:** Manager Kessler coordinated with Chris White, the Game Farm Manager. In order to free up space at the Game Farm, the first load of pheasants will be brought up to Lake Terrell in a couple weeks. Kessler began repairs on the pheasant pens, replacing netting support boards, patching holes in the netting, and making sure the watering system is functioning well.

***Manager Link visited a dog training competition at Pepper's Retriever Club put on by Whistling Wings Hunting Retriever Club***



**Island Unit:** Cosgrove made final field preparations and planted small portions of the Lorenzen and Seattle Pond fields (Island Unit) to cereal rye and millet.

**Samish Unit:** Meis continues to mow and treat weeds on the Samish Unit.

## **Private Lands/Access Management**

**Landowner Meeting:** Natural Resource Technician Otto met with multiple partner landowners this past week in the three county area. Topics included enrollment for the 2016 season, contract signings, and crop rotations.

**Waterfowl Hunt Units Barley Planting:** Natural Resource Technician Otto checked growth status on many waterfowl barley enhancement sites in Skagit and Whatcom counties. The plantings looked really positive. There is plenty of growth in the barley with excellent coverage in a variety of fields on or surrounding current quality hunt fields.

**Field Mowing:** Natural Resource Technician Otto coordinated with Skagit Wildlife Area staff members to borrow their field tractor. Otto mowed several Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program sites in Whatcom County.

*Natural Resource Technician Otto observed this western toad while mowing Waterfowl Quality Hunt Program sites in Whatcom County*

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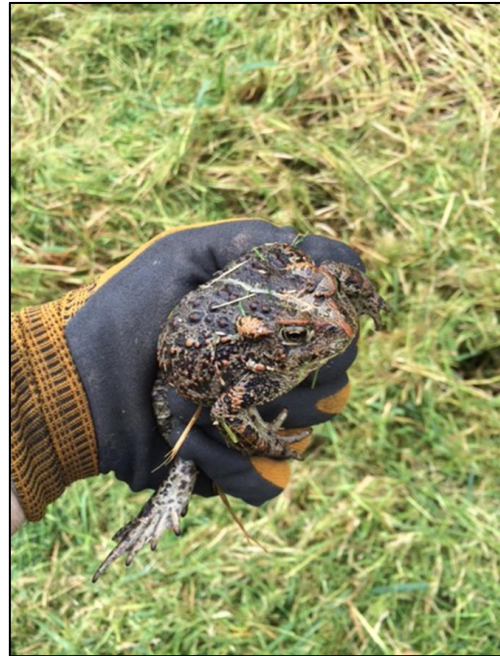
## **Wildlife Management**

**Wildlife Area Planning Process:** Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm participated in Core Team conference calls to discuss and plan next steps for the planning process. Manager Boehm and Core Team members facilitated a Wildlife Area Advisory Committee (WAAC) meeting on August 3.

**Corson Preserve:** Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm met with a local boy scout to develop an Eagle Scout Project for the unit. Focus will be on trail maintenance, invasive weed control, and repairs to viewing structures.

**Safety closure on WDFW's Pier 86**

**Seasonal Signage:** Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm posted pre-hunting season reminder signs on all of the hunting





units to alert users that hunting season begins September 1. Signage also informed users of the upcoming 8:00-4:00 unit hours.

### **Wildlife Conflict Management**

**Ungulate Conflict Management:** Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell received a report of possible Nutria near Stanwood. Supervisor Caldwell contacted the reporting party and asked that they attempt to photograph the animal. Supervisor Caldwell informed the reporting party that after evidence is provided, WDFW will move forward with management actions to address the situation. Supervisor Caldwell recovered a road kill calf elk along South Skagit Highway and reported this mortality to WDFW district staff members. Supervisor Caldwell contacted and provided information to an Anacortes resident who is having chronic problems with black-tailed deer. Supervisor Caldwell compiled and provided suggestions for an upcoming WDFW elk management meeting.

**Hazing:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman and Natural Resource Technician Cogdal participated in early morning hazing in the Hamilton area of Skagit County throughout the week. The hazing had limited success and has been ongoing for several months. Due to the lack of nonlethal success, a Master Hunter was deployed to the property.

#### ***Elk being hazed from a field in Skagit County***



**Elk Damage:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman received a damage complaint from a landowner in Birdsvie who has had elk coming through his front yard. They destroyed a livestock fence at the rear of his property. The landowner was concerned about his livestock while he was out of the area. Information was provided to neighbors to contact WDFW during the landowner's absence if problems continue.

#### ***Elk in the yard of Birdsvie residence***

**Agricultural Conflict:** Biologist Smith responded to multiple calls from the public relating to ungulates entering agricultural properties. Hazing strategies, fencing options, and rules relating to damage tags were discussed. Smith completed maintenance (brush/grass cutting, wire tightening) and installation for one electrified fladry fence excluding





elk from pumpkins and corn in the Green Valley area. Smith also coordinated with volunteers to perform weed removal around the perimeter of a second electrified fladry fence excluding elk from vegetable crops in the Enumclaw area. In addition, Smith coordinated with volunteers to erect another electrified fladry fence (also in the Enumclaw area) to exclude elk from corn.

**Wolf Sightings:** Wildlife Conflict Supervisor Caldwell compiled and updated wolf sighting information logs for Region 4. To date, only solitary wolves have been observed.

### **Wildlife Areas**

**Fir Island Farm:** The Skagit Wildlife Area, with assistance from Olympia and Regional staff members, hosted a media and funding agency field tour on the Breach Day of the Fir Island Farm Restoration. Project Manager Jenna Friebe organized the event, which allowed the media and funding agencies to witness the dike breach activity from start to the first incoming tide.

#### ***First shovel at the breach site on Fir Island Farm Restoration Project***

**Island Unit:** Meis and Cosgrove, with the assistance of the North Sound Weed Crew and Earth Corp group, cleared brush and debris near the hole in the dike on the Island Unit. The group was unable to find any obvious reasons for the hole within the cleared area. Cosgrove limbed alder and willow trees along the dikes on the Island Unit to improve vehicle and foot access. Cosgrove assisted the North Sound Weed Crew to move two marshmasters to the Island Unit. The Weed Crew will begin the cattail mowing treatments on the Deepwater Slough sites.



**Skagit Headquarters:** Meis and Cosgrove continue to trouble shoot and repair the water leak in pheasant pens at the Headquarters Unit. The Skagit is scheduled to receive pheasant early again this year to take some of the pressure off of the game farm for the final weeks of rearing. Skagit Wildlife Area staff members had the opportunity to attend the Enforcement Detachment 11 and 12 meeting to introduce everyone and the wildlife area to the new enforcement group. The group had the opportunity to discuss some of the Skagit specific enforcement issues and gain some understanding about the officer's perspective on these regulations. Manager Rotton, with the assistance of the North Sound Weed Crew and EarthCorp, cut and treated Purple Loosestrife on a small portion of the Headquarters Site. Additional treatment is scheduled in a few weeks when the EarthCorp group returns.

***Master Hunter Volunteer Marion Taylor has done an excellent job painting the Interpretative Center and outhouse at the Skagit Headquarters Unit.***

**Skagit Access Sites:** Natural Resource Technician Cosgrove sprayed noxious weeds at the Headquarters, Jensen, and Moberg units.

### **Private Lands/Access Management**

#### **Waterfowl Quality Hunt Unit**

**Contracts:** Biologist Wingard continued preparing contracts for waterfowl quality hunt units in the region. Natural Resource Technician Otto met with multiple partner landowners to discuss enrollment for the 2016 season, contract signings, and crop rotations.

### **Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator**

**Hunter Education Instructor Support:** Hunter Education Coordinator Steven Dazey activated five new hunter education classes in Region 4. Coordinator Dazey assisted with a hunter education class held at the Region 4 office. Dazey sent out a reminder invite for hunter education instructor applicants in Skagit County to attend an upcoming pre-service training opportunity. Dazey also sent out applicant packets. Dazey started work on identifying inactive instructors who have not taught a class in 2016. Policy manual requires that volunteer instructors participate in at least one class each year. Dazey will follow up with inactive instructors and encourage them to schedule a class this year still.

**Master Hunter Support:** Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator Dazey attended the Westside Master Hunter Orientation held at the Nile Shrine Center in Mountlake Terrace. The event was well-attended, with over 100 master hunters and master hunter applicants attending. Region 3 Coordinator Aaron Garcia, Enforcement Sergeant Maurstad, Conflict staff members Michael Smith and Scot Witman, and Master Hunter Advisory Group (MHAG) members John Mcauliffe and Jeff Larsen were also in attendance to answer questions and assist in the presentation.



#### ***GOAL 4: SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE, IMPROVING BUSINESS PROCESSES, AND INVESTING IN TECHNOLOGY***

**Training:** Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Manager Brian Boehm completed the mandatory IT Security Awareness training. Wildlife Conflict Biologist Cole Caldwell took CPR/First Aid training in Olympia.

Supervisory Biologist Caldwell, Biologist Wingard, Wildlife Conflict Specialist Witman, and Natural Resource Technician Cogdal attended CPR and First Aid training in Olympia. Biologist Wingard completed IT Security and Fire Extinguisher training in LMS.

### **REGION 5**

#### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

##### **Wildlife Management**

**Western Pond Turtle Habitat:** Biologist Anderson met with wildlife and botany staff members from the USFS Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area to discuss habitat restoration ideas for their Skamania County western pond turtle site. The USFS received funding to restore upland habitat more suitable for western pond turtle nesting. The objectives include treating and



controlling invasive plants and preparation of the site for re-planting native grasses and forbs. Follow-up treatments will be done to ensure the viability of the native plantings.

##### ***WDFW & USFS Cooperative Habitat Improvement Project***

**Goat Rocks Mountain Goat Survey:** Biologist Stephens compiled data from the recent volunteer survey of mountain goats in the Goat Rocks Wilderness. The survey was coordinated by Biologist Holman and conducted by members of Safari Club

International and the Rocky Mountain Goat Alliance. Nearly 400 goats were observed by the 20+ volunteers associated with the effort. Note that because the survey took place over the course of two days, some animals were likely counted twice and this is not considered an accurate estimate of the population in the Goat Rocks. The survey was conducted as part of WDFW's effort to manage for healthy wildlife populations and monitor for possible outbreaks of disease. Thanks to the members of Safari Club and the Rocky Mountain Goat Alliance for their participation in the second year of the Mount St. Helens mountain goat survey.

**Black-tailed Deer Research Project:** Regional Wildlife Biologists continued to monitor fawn survival for this year's work on the black-tailed deer research project. Currently in the



Coweeman cluster, seven out of 10 adult does captured in 2016 remain alive, while in the Washougal cluster, all four captured adult does remain alive. During the May-June birth period, all adult females associated with each study cluster were monitored frequently by a combination of satellite, VHF, and Vaginal Implant Transmitter (VIT) technology, and multiple attempts were made to capture their fawns. During the 2016 effort, a total of 14 fawns have been captured in the two Region 5 study clusters and seven remain alive. In addition, the collars from the four remaining does captured in 2014 began to drop off starting in late June. The two collars from the Coweeman cluster were previously retrieved at the beginning of July and one collar from the Washougal cluster was successfully retrieved this week.

**Annual Region PR Reports:** Region 5 biologists have started work on the annual Pittman-Robertson (PR) Status and Trend reports for mountain goats, elk, and deer management in Region 5. The reports summarize activities related to each species, including hunter harvest, season structure, survey efforts, research projects, habitat enhancements, population estimates, and more. The reports will be compiled with similar documents on all hunted species in Washington and finalized this fall. Interested parties can read the annual reports from past years by visiting the hunting page of WDFW's website and selecting Game Status and Trend Reports.

### **Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area**

**Canal Road Loosestrife Control:** Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area staff members have begun the yearly effort to control purple loosestrife, a noxious weed, which is growing along the banks of a backwater pond part of the Canal Road Unit of the Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area, which is connected to Silver Lake. Last year, staff members removed seed heads and applied an aquatic herbicide to a significantly higher number of plants than what is being found this year. The seed heads are removed to reduce the amount of seeds produced. Even after herbicide is applied to the entire plant, mature seed heads can still produce viable seed.

*Canal Road Unit of the Mount St. Helens Wildlife Area, Purple loosestrife control*



### **Klickitat Wildlife Area**

**Wheat Harvest:** Harvest of wheat on the Hatchery Unit is underway. Wheat is grown on this unit to benefit pheasants, and the terms of the agricultural lease require that 15% of the wheat is left standing in the field. The wheat fields on the Soda Springs Unit have already been harvested.

### *Wheat harvest on the Hatchery Unit*

#### **GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL EXPERIENCES**

##### **Access**

**Stinson Flats:** The Stinson Flats boat launch on the Klickitat River that washed out last winter is visible when the water is clear. The launch was taken by the current and turned sideways after the bank gave out and collapsed during high water. The ramp remained in one piece and stretches most of the way across the channel where it came to rest.

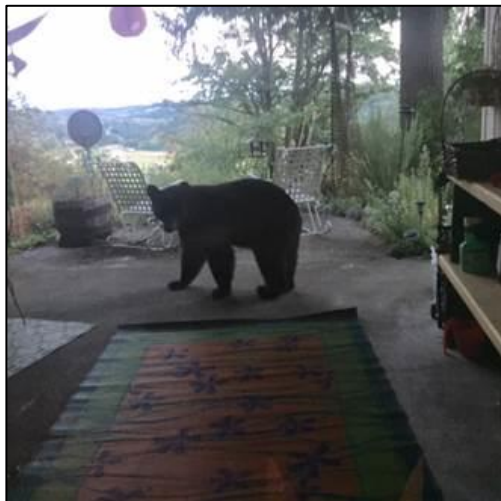


### *Stinson Flats washed away boat launch*

#### **GOAL 3: USE SOUND BUSINESS PRACTICES, DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE.**

##### **District 10 Wildlife Conflict**

**Bear:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin received a report of a bear on a porch in Centralia. This is the same bear that Conklin set a trap for just one week earlier. The upcoming bear season will hopefully get the bear to move on.



### *Bear on porch*

**Goose:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a call regarding a sick or injured goose at an RV park on Silver Lake. The goose had to be dispatched.

**Elk:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin deployed a master hunter to a farm in Randle that is experiencing damage to commercial crops of hay. Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a report of an aggressive cow elk in the Packwood area. It appears the elk is used to being fed. When the reporting party refused to feed her she became aggressive. The reporting party had to hit the elk with a broom to get her

to move on. Conklin did some outreach in the neighborhood and will distribute flyers regarding the negative aspects of feeding wildlife. The situation will also be monitored until it can be determined how best to proceed.

**Deer:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a report of a fawn that swam to the Blue Creek Boat Launch on the Cowlitz River and then collapsed. When Conklin arrived, the fawn had expired. The fawn had trauma on its hind quarters and along its back that was indicative of injury caused by dogs or coyotes. Conklin removed the deer from the area.

**Cougar:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin responded to a sighting of a cougar in the back yard of a remote area in Castle Rock. The cougar has been seen on multiple occasions. Advice was given.

### **District 9 Wildlife Conflict**

**Bear:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin called a landowner who was concerned about a bear that keeps coming near his residence. Conklin provided living with wildlife advice to the landowner.

**Elk:** Wildlife Conflict Specialist Conklin followed up on a report of an elk with a bag stuck in its mouth. Not enough specific information could be gathered to respond.

**Public Safety:** While driving through the Gifford Pinchot National Forest in Skamania County, Conflict Specialist Conklin and Biologist Meyer contacted a disheveled and disorientated female who stated she was lost. She had apparently got lost the night before. They drove the woman to the Ape Cave Interpretive Center where a Forest Service volunteer assisted her.

## **REGION 6**

### ***GOAL 1: CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE***

#### **Wildlife Management**

**Snowy Plover:** Biologist Sundstrom worked alone at Leadbetter for two days while the refuge biologist was away. Sundstrom found one new nest and followed up on the only other known active nest, located broods, and collected data on banded adults. Because Technician Raby has now moved on, Sundstrom may need to assist the refuge biologist one day per week, or as needed, until the last known brood has fledged.

Sundstrom conducted a plover survey at Graveyard Spit this week while Biologist Michaelis worked the Midway Beach area. All known nests at Graveyard have now hatched and only one nest remains at Midway. Biologist Michaelis observed three broods with varying age chicks at Midway.

<b>2016 Leadbetter and Island Season Totals</b>				
<b><i># Nests Discovered</i></b>	<b><i># Nests Active</i></b>	<b><i># Nests Hatched</i></b>	<b><i># Nests Failed</i></b>	<b><i># Nests w/ Unknown Fate</i></b>
<b>49</b>	2	23	20	4



<b>2016 Midway Beach and Graveyard Spit Season Totals</b>				
<i># Nests Discovered</i>	<i># Nests Active</i>	<i># Nests Hatched</i>	<i># Nests Failed</i>	<i># Nests w/ Unknown Fate</i>
65	1	24	32	8

**Bat Acoustic Project:** Biologist Ament deployed one set of equipment for acoustic monitoring of bats on August 4. The station was placed along a slough area near the Hoh River. This is the second time the station was deployed at this site.

**Dead Bats:** District biologists were contacted by WildComm regarding dead bats found by landowners in Port Ludlow and Port Angeles. Biologist Ament consulted with WDFW Veterinarian Haman and obtained a wealth of information regarding white-nose syndrome. She has requested that staff members collect dead bats when possible. She shared protocols for collecting dead bats and information to share when calls are received about sick or injured bats. Biologist Ament collected the two dead bats from the reporting party in Port Angeles. The bats are presently frozen and will be transported to Olympia in the future. The reporting party in Port Ludlow had already spoken with someone on the WDFW Hot Line for bats and was told the bats would not be collected.

**Dead Bald Eagle:** Biologist Ament was contacted by Dungeness Fish Hatchery staff members who found a dead adult bald eagle along the Elwha River on August 4. The cause of death was unknown. There were no power lines in the vicinity. There had been some minor predation of the bird, but the feathers were in good condition. The crew was willing to collect the eagle and transport it to the freezer at the hatchery. Later this fall, the eagle will be taken to the USFWS Office in Lacey.

**Seed Collection:** Biologist Ament and Volunteer Briana Spencer spent time on August 5 collecting seeds from one of the known Taylor's checkerspot butterfly sites located west of Port Angeles. Seed was collected from several species of plants that serve as host plants and nectar sources for this endangered species of butterfly. The seed will be provided to Biologist Hays and will be propagated at a newly established plant nursery. Plants generated from the seed will be used at various sites to improve Taylor's checkerspot butterfly habitat and will also serve as a source for future seed. Seed collection will continue this fall.



*Volunteer Briana Spencer collects fescue seeds*



*Seed pods collected from castilleja hispida*

**Fisher Camera Stations:** In a multi-agency, collaborative effort to document fisher presence on the Olympic Peninsula, Biologist Murphie established three camera/bait stations within a survey block located near the town of Shelton. Biologist Murphie conducted the first of three checks of these camera stations this week and reports taking photos of opossum, vulture, bobcat, deer, and a black lab. Bait was refreshed at each station and will be checked again in two weeks.

*Photo of opossum and bobcat at fisher camera station near Shelton*

**GOAL 2: PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE FISHING, HUNTING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES**

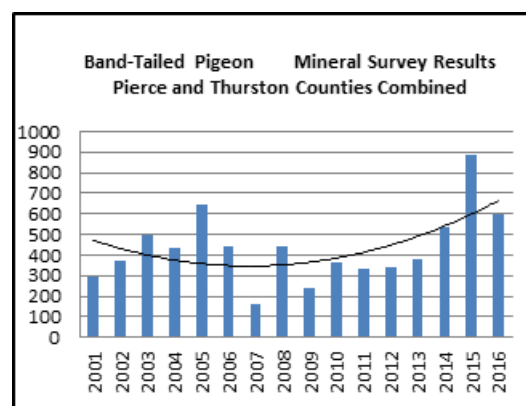
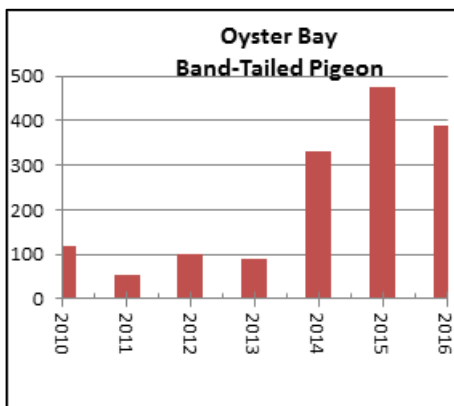


### Wildlife Management

**Mourning Dove Banding:** Biologist Michaelis continues to capture and band mourning doves at two locations. A total of 141 birds (117 hatch year, 23 adults, and one unknown sex) have been captured thus far. This is the highest number of mourning doves Biologist Michaelis has banded in a single year since banding in western Washington began in 2002. Dove trapping in eastern Washington has been slower than normal, and this year's statewide quota will require more bands to be installed on birds from western Washington.

**Land Acquisition:** Biologist Novack and Administrator Roberts visited some available properties along the Chehalis River floodplain. A multitude of properties are listed for sale, which have obvious recreational potential and are in close proximity to existing WDFW lands. Further investigation will ensue after Regional Program Manager Calkins and Lands Agent Cannon discuss the topic.

**Band-tailed Pigeon:** Biologist Tirhi completed the Oyster Bay pigeon survey, counting a high of 388 pigeons over six and a half hours.





*Observation point for Oyster Bay band-tailed pigeon survey, looking out blind towards the treeline along which pigeons fly to mineral site*

### **Private Lands /Conflict**

**Beavers:** Going on two weeks with no beaver activity since strips of bear hide were strung over an area of the dam next to the bridge.

**Grayland Cranberries:** Biologist Harris picked up a deer harvested by a producer using a kill permit and delivered it to the Union Gospel Mission. As always, they were very happy to receive the meat. The elk have recently visited another bog. He attempted to install another

camera at this location. Unfortunately, distance and too many trees prevented the camera from communicating with the base. The base may need to be moved to attempt coverage for the whole area. He also worked on the remote camera system. He moved one camera and placed a solar panel to charge the battery. Cameras provided many pictures of deer using the bogs at night.

Grayland is another area with beaver problems. Biologist Harris was contacted by a producer asking how to get a permit to trap beavers. He suggested maybe trying bear hide first. Strips were placed near intakes, dams, and other locations, such as the cribbing that walls the drainage ditches. The beavers have not returned after five days.

**Long Beach Cranberries:** A disabled Master Hunter who drew an antlerless elk permit had a very good weekend. He and his hunter companion, who is also a Master Hunter, were given damage prevention permits for deer by one of the producers. After hunting several days, he managed to harvest a cow elk, and they both harvested antlerless deer. Both of these hunters gained the respect of several producers because they spent a lot of time pre-scouting the properties prior to the season. The result was the producer wanted to give them permits because they believed these two could harvest.

**Forks Elk:** Biologist Harris is receiving more complaints about the elk in Forks. He has been attempting to meet with one producer. He will also have discussions with the city since it is just outside of the city limits and no matter what actions are taken, there will be some opinions.

### **Access Areas**

**Black River – Thurston County/Gate Site:** An abandoned boat filled with garbage was illegally dumped at the Gate site. After the boat was cleared for removal by Enforcement, the boat was loaded into a dump trailer tarped and hauled to the landfill. Records for the \$60.00 dumping fee, mileage on equipment, and employee hours for the clean-up are filed, in the event the violator is found.





***GOAL 3: PROMOTE A HEALTHY ECONOMY, PROTECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER, MAINTAIN AN OVERALL HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, AND DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE***

**Wildlife Management**

**Peregrine Falcon:** Biologist Tirhi banded one juvenile female peregrine falcon captured by a licensed falconer in Pierce County. All permit paperwork was confirmed as legitimate before banding and information was sent to the WDFW state permit coordinator.

**Other**

**Report of Rookery:** Biologist Novack answered various customer service questions. One caller reported finding a blue heron rookery. A site visit is being scheduled to verify the rookery.

***GOAL 4: BUILD AN EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION BY SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE, IMPROVING BUSINESS PROCESSES, AND INVESTING IN TECHNOLOGY***

**Other**

**Exit Interview:** Biologist Novack received equipment and conducted the exit interview for Technician Raby. This was Technician Raby's second season as the plover technician. She performed an excellent job at Leadbetter and we wish her luck as she pursues a graduate degree in California.

**SWAP Assignment:** Biologist Ament was selected to participate in a small interregional team that will help to identify ways to improve the tools developed through the SWAP process so they can be more readily implemented by the regions. Jeff Azerrad is responsible for leading this effort and provided a homework assignment to the group. Biologist Ament encountered some problems when working in ArcMap. She may need to complete the assignment using a more efficient computer. She will consult with Jeff for more direction.